

Reviews of Books.

Berman, L., M.D. *The Glands Regulating Personality.* Macmillan Co., New York. 1921. 18s. net.

DR. BERMAN has written one of those books which one is glad have been written, but glad also that one has not written oneself. The work of the last twenty years on the endocrine system, the extraordinary powers possessed by the secretions of the individual glands, and the delicately regulated interaction of the whole system, with its complexity of check and counter-check, has made it clear that the ductless glands are in higher animals one of the most important agencies that help in the regulation of form and function—in other words, one of the dominant forces moulding personality. As Mr. Carr-Saunders has said in his recent book on Population, temperament is even more important than intellect in achieving success in the present state of civilization; and temperament is obviously in large part an affair of endocrine balance.

It was therefore high time that the general public should be made aware of this revolutionary change in ideas, should be made to see how this central fact of personality and temperament was no longer a mere mystery, but in great measure capable of interpretation along accepted biological lines of thought. This Dr. Berman has undoubtedly done. He has got the subject talked about; he has thrown a glove into the ring, and even his bitterest antagonists must busy themselves with the problem if they want to confute him.

But the book has many faults. For one thing, it is not documented. There are no references given, and not only the lay reader, but the average biologist may be pardoned if he sometimes ask how much is ascertained fact, and how much is hypothesis.

Take for example, the discussion of the types of face associated with excess or deficiency of various glands. Mr Squire has poked enough fun at "Shelley's typically hypothyroid face" in his amusing ballade. But it is not only a question of fun-poking. Such questions can only be settled by elaborate statistical investigations, not by the *ipse dixit*s of clinicians; and nowhere do we find any reference to such statistics,—for the reason, I believe, that none have yet been compiled.

Then the style is, to say the least of it, American. Of Brown-Séquard:—"The call of Paris was in his blood, which was indeed a supersaturated solution of *wanderlust*" (p. 35). In "a cat when it is alarmed by the sight of a dog . . . a nerve tract, in use as the line for that particular message in a hundred thousand generations of cats, whirs its yell to the medulla of the adrenal gland." (p. 75) Not only

does he thus impart new associations to old ideas, but gives a new characterization of the present age:— "To-day, anti-adrenal, anti-religious ideas are epidemic" (p. 208). One last quotation:—"The pituitary personality in childhood produced by limitation of the size of the gland . . . presents typical hall-marks. He supplies the precocious hoboos, the mental and moral deficientes and defectives, the prey of the sentimental complexes of elderly virgins and helpful futility all around. Not utilitarianism or futilitarianism is needed, but pituitarianism." (p. 214). Perhaps this last sentence will inspire Mr. Squire to another poem.

The omissions are almost as startling as the commissions. It appears that Dr. Berman does not think the nervous system responsible for any important part of our personality, save indirectly through endocrine agency. A study of insect instinct alone would have shown him his error, an error that the psychologists are not likely to allow to stand.

There is not only room, but need, for a book which will sum up our knowledge of the ductless glands, and the bearings of that knowledge, in a way that is both popular and accurate. If Dr. Berman will prepare for his second edition by documenting his statements, by discarding some of his wilder biological speculations (such as Gaskell's theories of vertebrate ancestry, or his ideas about the development of mammals in the Tertiary (p. 102), or about hermaphroditism (p. 186),) by curbing his clinical imagination, and by pruning his style, he will have done us all a very great service.

J. S. HUXLEY.

Cotton, Henry A., M.D. Medical Director New Jersey State Hospital, Trenton, U.S.A. *The Defective Delinquent and Insane.* Oxford University Press, 1921. Pp. 201. 12s. 6d. nett.

THE main theme of this book is the causal relationship of sepsis, particularly of the teeth and tonsils, but also of the alimentary and genito-urinary tracts, to mental disorder and delinquency. Short reports are given of 25 patients suffering from various forms of psychosis in whom septic foci were discovered, the removal of which resulted in more or less rapid cure. The following brief extracts from Case I are fairly typical of the whole: A patient was admitted in March 1918, in a very apprehensive state, thinking he was going to be killed and rapidly becoming worse. In May it was noticed that he had four crowned molars, these were extracted and two days following he became normal; he was discharged in June and remained well three years later. Now, no one will deny that persons suffering from a psychosis may have a septic focus, and it is true that in a small proportion of such persons the removal of this focus results in a return to mental equilibrium; but when the author proceeds to make such sweeping statements as "We are to-day in a position to show that the doctrine of heredity as applied to mental disorders is not in harmony with modern biological knowledge and is, therefore, obsolescent," and "we do know that the infections should be considered far more important in the production of mental disease than heredity, mental factors, environmental defects, personality, and improper training, because they can be more